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ANDRÉ MAUROIS
Defender of Dickens. (Keystone photo.)

Charles Dickens and Respectability

THE SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY: A Life of Charles Dickens. By Hugh Kingsmill. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1935. $3.

DICKENS. By André Maurois. Translated by Hamish Miles. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1935. $2.

Reviewed by SAMUEL C. CHEW

CLOSING Mr. Kingsmill's book, I am reminded of the Democrat in the campaign of 1928 who, having listened to a tirade against Al Smith by a member of the Union League Club, turned away saying, "If that's the way you feel about him, I just hope you won't ever speak to me again." I am reminded also of the Englishman who some time ago communicated to the *Atlantic Monthly* some comments upon the errors in a facetious article on Palestine by Mr. A. Edward Newton, and closed his letter with the remark: "Personally, I wish people like Mr. Newton wouldn't visit the Holy Land." The world of Dickens is not a holy land; but Mr. Kingsmill is not willing to allow that Dickens had the artist's right to fashion a fairyland, not even a cockney fairyland. Monsieur Maurois, wiser and more serene and with no psycho-analytical axe to grind, insists upon the fact, which is none the less true for being a truism, that the artist in order to create a world must be able to escape from the real one. As for his readers, "we ask that art should carry us into a world which is sufficiently unreal for us to be able to escape the cares of action, decision, responsibility." Surely the world around us in this year of much-needed grace, 1935, is not so well-ordered and so satisfying that we can afford to scorn those who find in the world of Dickens a refuge from actuality.

The psycho-analysts stand by genius like travellers beside the oilwells of Baku, peering into the crater and watching the slimy bubbles that break upon the surface emitting mephitic vapours. The simile is unfair to many men of genius. Say rather that the analysts hope to catch samples of such fumes and if the genius does not throw off the expected poisons they are capable of manufacturing them from their own subconscious. Not until Mr. Kingsmill had applied this method to the novels of Dickens did we suspect that the episode of Oliver asking for "more" is "an idealized version" of Dickens's conviction that he was entitled to more than he had

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Among the Slicks

'A Story for Those Rare Souls Who Can Smile at Magazines as They Find Them'

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

RECENTLY, just for something to do, I started making an examination of the most popular American magazines. There is nothing like them either in England or on the Continent. Our large and prosperous periodicals for the home, printed on coated paper, liberally illustrated through the ingenuity of alert art departments, with covers in color and often with colored illustrations, are, in the majority of cases, aimed at women. On their covers they constantly flaunt rosters of names, many to conjure with as "circulation builders." Nevertheless, every year a certain number of new names appear, chiefly those of fiction writers, many of them writers of the magazine short story, with which form of contribution lies my present concern.

The more intellectual may immediately challenge me as to the welcoming of new names by the large-circulation magazines. In rebuttal I can only say that I have found, upon a survey for one month of *Liberty, Good Housekeeping, Collier's, The Saturday Evening Post, Redbook, McCall's, Pictorial Review,* and *The American Magazine,* at least twenty-five writers unfamiliar to me. It is true, of course, that the large-circulation magazines develop a certain standard brand of author who produces according to special needs. A new popular-magazine editor once told me that, though an assiduous reader of contemporary fiction, when she entered upon her new work she found she must familiarize herself with a list of authors who were household words to the home magazines and the large literary agencies as reliable purveyors of stories for the family—but of none of whom she had ever heard! Nevertheless, may I point out that the O. Henry Memorial Award of 1934 went to the initial story by a new writer, Louis Paul, which had appeared in a large-circulation magazine; and that to such magazines he had sold his first six stories?

Those who try to help new writers market their fiction have various names for the magazines of large circulation. They are the "big books" or the "slicks," the latter referring to their coated stock. There is also the "quality group," a much narrower classification of magazines, smaller in size and circulation, which demand distinguished writing: *Scribner's, Harper's, The Atlantic Monthly.* Then, in a lower category, we have a vast swarm of periodicals known as the "pulps," printed on uncoated paper. They are not necessarily any cheaper in price than the "slicks." Some of them sell for as high as twenty cents, and some of the "slicks" sell for as low as a nickel, *vide: The Saturday Evening Post, Collier's,* and *Liberty.* But the "pulps" are far cheaper in appearance. A horde of writers contribute to them at comparatively small remuneration; while a "big" writer for the "slicks" can command $1,500 or more for a short story.

I should say that in the average American home there was a pretty general reading, by the father, of the weekly *Saturday Evening Post,* and by the mother and daughters of either *The Ladies' Home Journal, The Woman's Home Companion, Good Housekeeping, The Pictorial Review, The Delineator,* or *McCall's Magazine.* Father, every week, may also purchase *Collier's* or *Liberty.* It is upon the average American family that the "slicks" depend for their income; and they can make even a mediocre story look extraordinary through illustration's artful aid. Many of them also, aside from all sorts of specially drawn titles and striking pictures, use subtitle captions to catch the attention of the reader. These captions are florid, designed to stimulate fundamental emotions.

One I find attached to a story by Zona Gale (incidentally an American novelist of not inconsiderable merit): "A Story for Those Rare Souls who Can Smile at Life as They Find It." For others there are such descriptions as, "The Story of a Man who Faced Death and Found Love in One of Earth's Far Corners," "A Romance as Delicate and Glowing as an Old Chinese Brocade," "A Sweeping Story of Stanch Men and Women," "The Eternal Triangle—Two Lovely Women and a Man Worth Fighting For," "A Sweetheart Story for Valentine's Day," "An Epic of Courage, Ruggedness and Dreams." "Mad is the Heart of Love," "Can Atonement for One Rash Moment ever be Realized in a Lifetime's Span?" "A Charming Story of a Beautiful Girl's Quest for Love."

At first blush—and how the color mounts to my face!—from such blurbs one might expect to find the stories of purest bilge serene. The trouble is, some of them are quite good! A few are excellent. We seem to have developed magazine fiction writers of considerable ingenuity and narrative ability. This article is written not at all in the spirit of sneering at them. Most of them know the construction of a short story far better than the present scribe. Many of them are good workmen. Simply, the theme-songs of their fiction are loud-pedalled by the magazine editors. It is showmanship for the masses. And it seems to work.

The stories so presented run for a page or two free from accompanying advertising, and then the run-over, in the large women's magazines, proceeds through fashion pages which are an important part of such periodicals, through illustrations of the toque, the soaring brim, shirrings, prints, novelty weaves in wools, good examples of remodeled interiors (I mean, as to houses!), buying beef in the market, the shopping service, the beauty clinic, closet cleverness, and cosmetics, into the magic realm of Listerine, Cannon Towels, Bon Ami, Pond's Face Powder, Lux, Draino, Cream of Wheat, Scott's Emulsion, Pillsbury's Cooking Service, Jello, Spencer Corsets, Elizabeth Arden, Fleischmann's Yeast, Rinso, Old Dutch Cleanser, and Del Monte Asparagus! And there is much more of this variegated surrounding scenery through which the continuation of the story trickles on. Indeed, I became so fascinated with what I saw by the way, in perusing a romance, that (apropos of the subtitling of stories) I began to find a lot of splendid titles and subtitles in the ads themselves! "Men Forever Follow," "The Best Spaghetti" (a humorous story, that would be, of American home life!), "I Adore You," "Mrs. O. Had a Baby Last Night" (though that's more a story for

(*Continued on next page*)

EDNA FERBER
Photograph by Nikolas Muray

Riches of the North

COME AND GET IT. By Edna Ferber. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

THE best part of Edna Ferber's long, full novel—indeed, the only first rate part—is the picture of the Wisconsin background. From the Oklahoma of "Cimarron" she has turned to the wilderness of the Great Lakes region, its industries, its millionaires, its motley, hardy population, its atmosphere of exploitation and money-making. The story begins at a time when the lumber and mining kings were still unfettered by governmental oversight or control, and just commencing to grumble about the wild ideas of La Follette and the first Roosevelt. It is a study from the outside, not the inside; it has clearly been gotten up by Miss Ferber as a research-student gets up his facts; but it provides body and substance for a book that would otherwise be simply a gangling and unconvincing story of family difficulties and the rise and fall of some newly-rich people of no very distinctive qualities.

Here is the Fox River Valley, the humming pulp and paper mill that easily turns out a hundred thousand pounds of paper a day, the town of Americans, Poles, Dutch, and others nestling beside the mill, the Millionaire's Row that shows what tremendous wealth the raw north can

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This Week

FROM ABOVE
By ISABEL FISKE CONANT

SHIPS AND HOW THEY SAILED THE SEVEN SEAS
By HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON
Reviewed by William Doerfinger

A HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR
By C. R. M. F. CRUTTWELL
Reviewed by Frank H. Simonds

LEOPOLD THE UNLOVED
By LUDWIG BAUER
Reviewed by David Owen

THIS IS WOOLLCOTT . . .
By JOHN T. WINTERICH

SHRUNKEN HEADS
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Next Week or Later

ADVICE TO A NOVELIST ABOUT TO BE BORN
By PEARL S. BUCK

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Among the Slicks

(*Continued from first page*)

Mr. Whit Burnett's *Story*), "All Mothers Dread," "The Old Plantation's Secret," "Chicken Pie, Family Style" (title for Edna Ferber!), "Mr. Goof is Tamed," "Waterlilies" (title for Zona Gale!), "Hy Gene!" (a story of boyhood friendship), and so on. Subtitles too: "News of Folks Back Home," "Of the Gay Young Group that Dictates what's 'Done' in New York," "Before You Know It You'll Be Feeling On Top of the World—as a Proud New Father *Should* Feel," "The Young Davises Had Been Married Only a Year, but Jack Had Started to Stay in Town with the Boys on Saturday Nights." (That last, by the way, initiates a snappy narrative dedicated to Brer Rabbit Molasses!) Also I found "Three Minute Relief," which might be a good title for a gangster and police story, "Roxy and His Gang," a boy-story, "Mother!" (and another one on the same maternal subject, "Mum"), "Hotel Hostess," and "Don't Wait For the Postman" (a sequel, obviously, to "The Postman Always Rings Twice").

Then came the reverse-English. I didn't see why the subtitle of a story in the body of the magazine, "Sheila Made Passes at the Stranger But He didn't Respond," shouldn't have done for Life Buoy Soap, or "And Many Were the Heads Bashed Because Kathleen Married a Traveller," might not have come in handy for Prudential Insurance! "A Man Almost Forgets His Wife and Children" could have served its turn either for insurance, again, or a Memory Course; and "The Story of a Girl Who Didn't Belong" was a "natural" for a Pyorrhoea ad.

That's what happens to you if you plunge too suddenly into *Pictorial, McCall's, Good Housekeeping, Woman's Home Companion,* and *The Ladies' Home Journal*—or into *Liberty, Redbook, Collier's,* for that matter.

All of which really leads up to something. The large advertisers support the smooth-paper magazines. They are why

AT THE GATEWAY TO THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Newsstand at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street. Photographed for The Saturday Review *by Robert Disraeli.*

(believe me, color printing costs!), and why another can feature an article by Grace Coolidge. Havoline and the New-Value Dodge, Ramco and Kelvinator, Veedol and the new Ford V-8, Philco and RCA and the National Casket Company, are why any young writer who manages to break into *The Saturday Evening Post* with a short story gets a fatter check for it than if he had sold it to *Harper's.* Big advertisers string along with big audiences, and big audiences—?

They mean that the "slicks" have certain major requirements in the realm of the short story, just as the big advertisers mean that there must be no treading on certain toes. All this dictates certain short story patterns and definite limitations as to what the magazine can use.

But at this point I refuse to cry "Formula!" after the fashion of the perhaps more advanced; because, if you take a course (exacerbating as it may be to the nerves!) in our contemporary big-circulation magazines, and really start reading the stories in them, you may be agreeably surprised concerning the leeway, under the circumstances, that they give their writers nowadays, and the skill of the writing. Nevertheless, certain things in general hold true.

Social criticism is pretty generally *out,* save for a glancing blow. Certain words are still taboo. In this latter respect, Mr. Balmer of *Redbook* allows his writers more freedom than most. But then he's a writer himself. And even then! When you're selling your magazine to a million people or something like it, you apparently become rather old-maidish concerning realistic detail. Then there are the favorite themes. I asked a magazine writer of short stories about this, and he replied, "Oh yes, there is of course Cinderella, first and foremost; and then there is Jack the Giant-Killer (only they have to be the right kind of giants!); and then there is Goldilocks and the Three Bears, who are all varieties of the wicked Manhattan male—theatre managers and such. And eternally there is the story in which the downtrodden reader can identify himself with the hero, who has had a mortally tough break at the start, but comes out with colors flying at the end. And then there is the Eat-your-cake-and-have-it-too story in which the splendors of affluence are described in a way to make your mouth water, but it is firmly pointed out that the good old solid domestic virtues—and probably life on a farm—are vastly superior. Those are just a few of the sure-fires. People can have their fling, of course, in magazine stories. Young men in love can be incredibly fast workers or positive industrial geniuses; men and women can travel the globe, penetrate into all sorts of out-of-the-way kingdoms and countries, indulge in wrestling matches with Bengal tigers or with lamas in Thibet; become, even, beachcombers on tropical isles. But in the end they must serve to illustrate conventional virtue, or be instrumental in its victory over the forces of—well, the forces—oh, anyway, the Forces! And the American Girl must usually triumph. There has never been anything in history like the 'Triumph of the American Girl!' "

All this is true. But when the more intellectual writers of fiction begin to gird at the writers who appear steadily in the large circulation magazines, they are off

give them cards and spades. They are good craftsmen. They are not allowed, perhaps, to write stories like Mr. Caldwell (though a story of Mr. Caldwell's has just graced the pages of a more or less conventional magazine, and Thomas Wolfe appears pretty regularly in *Scribner's*), or like Mr. Faulkner (though one of the best of his stories appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*), or ramble like Mr. Saroyan (though the *Redbook* has just printed one of Mr. Saroyan's stories), or choose for their themes rape, homosexuality, incest, or the examination of latrines—interesting as are these themes. Often the content of their stories is quite superficial in its observation of life, or highly romanticized, or stereotyped in its treatment of human emotions; but it is also often exceedingly well-informed as to the *milieu* presented, the technique of a particular profession or business, the actual daily life of the people with whom it deals. Usually there is something cheerful or heroic or optimistic about it. Young love is almost always triumphant, signing off just before the real fun (if you call it fun) of marriage starts. Or, if there is an unhappy marriage, there is a way out, and the two main lovers of the story come through beautifully, even though some near relative has to be killed in the process. Sometimes the issue is begged scandalously. Some of our best novelists occasionally deteriorate into writing mere pot-boilers for the popular magazines. But usually the chief trouble with the stories is a dead level of innocuousness. There have, however, been, and there continue to be, good yarns, in spite of all this, in the "slicks." They may not delve as deep into psychological processes as do certain ones in the "quality group" magazines. Nor do they satisfy, I am sure, the proletarians. They deal largely with what the proletarians dismiss as the bourgeoisie—a large percentage, after all, of our American population. (And where did most of them come from? From the proletariat.) And I know that a Hemingway comes along and is first published in Paris. And when a Saroyan emerges he is

family magazines: they don't give us stories that are mere vignettes and no more, as the more advanced magazines tend to. An occasional story of *genre* is all right, but the more intellectual magazines seem to rely on it far too much. I am often reminded of the now household words of the South African poet, Roy Campbell:

> You use the snaffle and the curb all right,
> But where's the bloody horse?

The writers of advanced short stories seek often merely to capture a mood or a nuance, and to leave most of their story out. Or they simply lead up to a good, rich, satisfying rape. The writer of the proletarian short story is sometimes so busy showing how the workers are exploited by bloated capitalists that he warps his real story out of shape just as much as do some *Saturday Evening Post* writers who try to prove that that's all a lot of boloney. There are no particular rules for the short story, but, by Heaven! there is such a thing as a *real* story; which is not achieved by too delicate a pastel of the night-breeze wafting over the garbage on the old back-stoop, or through the mere soliloquy of Truda Helsingfors, the Wisconsin hired help, as she stumbles by moonlight along the cornfield, to be assaulted by Nels Swenson.

Of course, we all know that there is a difference between the concocted story and the story that honestly develops out of a writer's consciousness, and is allowed to take its own shape and grow in its own organic fashion. With this in mind, a good many of the "slick" stories would come under the head of concoctions, though some of them are clever ones. But I think this is also due to the fact that only a few people, like Kipling, are born with instinctive "story sense." Others, however hard they plot and build, cannot acquire it. The magic ingredient just isn't there. I feel, in spite of this, that there is latent major talent in the ranks of the story-writers who have been shaping-up things for *The Saturday Evening Post* and the women's magazines. I don't say they are altogether hampered by their media. Some of them write perfectly honestly of the things they know, within bounds they cannot transgress. I merely say that if they felt the editors weren't watching them so closely, they might do more significant work.

This month in a certain literary bulletin on the craft of writing, *The Blue Pencil,* edited by Thomas H. Uzzell, there is the continuation of a "practical talk" by Camelia Waite, in which she analyzes "drama in the big circulation magazines." She tells us that *Collier's* is "conspicuously a magazine devoted to the world of sport, amusement, and adventure," that the *Ladies' Home Journal* affects "stories of sentimental, romantic, or comic love, and stories of domestic problems," that "you can quickly recognize the sex emphasis" in a *Liberty*

rules. But "the one thing which is always present," she says, "is drama." There is always the conflict, the barrier to be surmounted, the "box" to be got out of. "In the literary magazines you can get by with a box which is contained within the man's own personality . . . in the big circulation magazine it is a box made up of visible, tangible, external barriers . . . in the pulps it is a visible external box, from which the man must escape or die." This seems to me a good analysis.

In closing, as I rise from the sea of American magazines in which I have immersed myself, the competition in the field of the short story in America seems to me unusually strong and lusty. I have not even touched on the contents of the "pulps," and they can boast their hundreds—probably thousands—of writers of stories of unalleviated action. There seem to be plenty of markets.

I was asked originally to endeavor to outline a story according to the differing formulæ of different magazines. I have found it impossible to do so, because of the variety of their stories. There are a few predilections I discern, just as there used to be in the past; but that is all. There was a time, about a quarter of a century ago, when most of the stories in *Harper's,* for instance, seemed to be laid in houses with hook rugs on the floor. At least, the illustrators of the old Howard Pyle school used to draw and paint a lot of hook rugs and rural interiors! And then there are tides of what is hyphenatedly called "reader-interest" in a particular type of fiction. Lately it has lain very much with the hard-boiled variety. The author of "Brain Guy" now does such stories, with tough patter, for the *Redbook.* I think, however, that hard-boiled fiction as a steady diet has about run its course; though after so many mere love stories in the magazines, involving nice but commonplace people, it has had a stimulating influence. I do not know what the next tide may bring in, but I believe that today, even the magazine fiction writer is facing reality with less desire to hide behind the skirts of romance.

From Above

By ISABEL FISKE CONANT

SEE how, when mortals love, there streams a light
That gives a glowing wing-plume to each shoulder,
Pulsating like a flame and burning bright,
Deepening its radiance as they grow bolder,
While music rises from their mingled breath
Until the listener plunges down to share
In this repeated conquest over death,
Though of his presence they are unaware.

They have released up to the higher spheres
Their quivering ecstasy into a chord,
Not for the pleasuring of their own ears
But for the oratorio of the Lord
Of Saturn's rings, Aldebaran and Mars,
The Pleiades and all the singing stars.

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The Darker Side of Maritime History

SHIPS AND HOW THEY SAILED THE SEVEN SEAS. By Hendrik Willem van Loon. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1935. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM DOERFLINGER

"THERE are three sorts of people," wrote the philosopher Anacharsis of Scythia, "those who are alive, those who are dead, and those who are at sea."

This epigram, unearthed by Mr. van Loon, might serve as a text for this argus-eyed book of ships and the poor mortals who have been set apart by fate for the business of manning them. Surveying maritime life as it has manifested itself on the otherwise pure waters of our planet from the early morning of history to the beginning of the twentieth century, and finding it full of hardship, filth, and needless cruelty, Mr. van Loon sums up all seafaring by pointing out that "life aboard ship was simply unfit for human beings, originally created after the image of God." In developing the theme, Mr. van Loon has again been able to give us a book which is completely new though its subject is very old, and entirely original even though countless authors have handled, part by part, the same material which interests Mr. van Loon as one fascinating chapter in the annals of mankind.

On the whole it is a dark chapter, though a stirring one. Now that it has come to a close—for the modern steamer is scarcely a ship in the historical sense of the word—one can look back at the history of navigation and realize how negligible was man's progress in developing his ships from century to century, and how half-hearted his efforts to improve conditions of life aboard them.

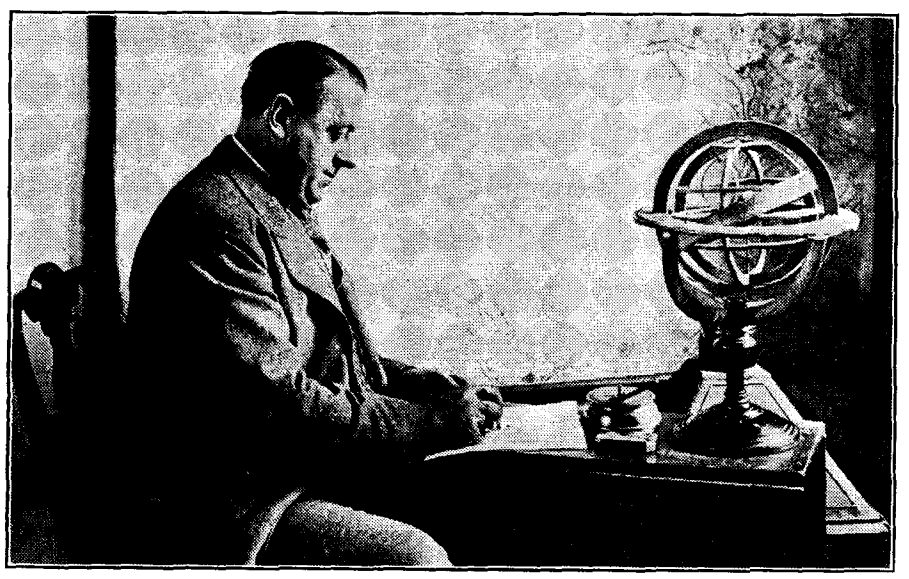
Glancing at other ages, Mr. van Loon is confronted with odoriferous galleys, flogging convict ships, keel-hauling men-of-war, murderous Western Ocean immigrant packets, and many other deadly fleets. From such evidence, the same in every century, he can only conclude that sea life in the good old days was "nothing but one unending record of misery and pain and hunger and thirst and bodily abuse, a plain slice of hell-on-earth."

Now, some readers will be very much upset by this discovery. They will think of many other authors who have told of the hardships of the sea, and it may seem to them that Mr. van Loon's just indictment of life afloat is lugubriously chorused by the sea writers of all time—Masefield in "Dauber," Conrad in "Youth," and by the Hon. Michael Scott in "Tom Cringle's Log," and in such personal reminiscences of years under sail as Captain Bone's "Brassbounder" and Rex Clement's "Gypsy of the Horn." For hardships, one cannot turn to better books than those.

Yet of course that is not really the case at all, for these writings go beyond, into the story of the impact of sea life on the individual soul, while Mr. van Loon looks at ships differently. He sees them not as splendid creatures of oak, hemp, iron, and canvas, but rather as sociological phenomena which partake largely of the eternal problems of wage-slavery, disease, and bad housing conditions.

Thus he can write about the American clipper ships, but because the officers of those ships, intent on furthering man's mastery over sea, space, and time, sometimes had to deal roughly with incompetents and soldierers, he can say (now that the clippers have done their work), "A curse upon their memory!" Which is highly stimulating and really makes one think about the clipper ships. Clearly, their decks were not beds of roses; but if their memories are not curséd and simply can't be made so, it has been for certain reasons which stem from the less bodily and more exalted attributes of man.

On the reverse of the double-folded dust jacket in which his book is wrapped, Mr. van Loon gives us a splendid map of explorations, done in a strange projection all his own. His drawing and his writing are very similar. In the map's colored circle, he includes most of the spherical world. In "Ships," Mr. Van Loon exerts his immediate control over the sea, but again he gives his readers a story of mankind and man's whole planet.



HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

The Best Yet

A HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR. By C. R. M. F. Cruttwell. New York: Oxford University Press. 1935. $5.50.

Reviewed by FRANK H. SIMONDS

FOR more than ten years I have been looking for a straightforward, concise history of the World War which was, on the one hand, fortified by the necessary evidence which the post-war years have supplied and, on the other, was free from the prejudices inevitable in the contemporaneous reports. The present volume seems to me to satisfy every possible requirement in both respects.

Lacking as the book does the personal brilliance of Winston's Churchill's narrative it is also without the limitations which attach to any piece of special pleading of one of the conspicuous participants. In the same fashion, while its author does not pretend to the technical competence of Captain Liddell Hart, he thereby escapes controversies more interesting to the professional soldier than the ordinary reader. Finally, the present account is written much later than the monumental work of John Buchan and therefore, necessarily, with far more complete knowledge of the essential facts.

Enthusiasm on the part of the reviewer, I am aware, is something hardly to be encouraged and yet, in all fairness, I must say I read this book with a constantly growing enthusiasm and, at the end, laid it down with the conviction that it was far and away the best general account of the military operations of the World War that I had yet come across.

The author, C. R. M. F. Cruttwell, now principal of Hertford College, Oxford, England, served first in the trenches and then as an Intelligence Officer at the War Office. As a result he saw the conflict both at close range and in perspective. His book, however, is the work of a trained historian, who has brought to his task a scholar's judgment fortunately reinforced by a soldier's experience. It is, therefore, astonishingly fair; impressively documented not merely on the British side but also on the French, German, and American as well, and not the least attractive detail is the disclosure of equally great capacity to comprehend and to compress.

Royal Buccaneer

LEOPOLD THE UNLOVED. By Ludwig Bauer. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1935. $3.50.

Reviewed by DAVID OWEN

IN Leopold II of Belgium all the ingredients of popular biography stand ready for the hand of the mixer. From his private life, where he was the unromantic but thoroughgoing libertine, to his exploits in the Congo no element of sensationalism is lacking. There is, perhaps, little to admire in him save his energy and his undoubted political genius. But these were of such dimensions as to mark him as no common man. Few nineteenth-century monarchs enjoyed such a generous measure of political and financial ability as his, and few, if any, used their talents with as little regard for principle.

Belgium was too small a field for the talents of its king, who was an ambitious Coburger. But where to turn? Other nations had already gobbled up the most tempting of overseas lands. The interior

LEOPOLD II AND PRINCESS CLEMENTINE

of Africa, however, still remained, a piece of territory large enough for even Leopold's greedy desires. The steps by which he obtained control of the Congo, virtually as a personal empire, form one of the most brilliant (and sordid) chapters in the history of imperialist maneuvering. In 1876, well camouflaged by philanthropy and humanitarianism, the *Association Internationale Africaine* was organized under the sponsorship of Leopold. Two years later he created the *Comité d'Etudes du Haut Congo*, an inspired title for the joint-stock company that was secretly to finance the carving out of an empire. H. M. Stanley, the unsuspicious agent of the royal buccaneer, established stations and made treaties with the natives—the sort of treaties that are perennially made with natives.

Two problems still faced the king. First of all, he must secure his title by gaining recognition from the other nations. This he accomplished by a series of intrigues shrewdly conceived and subtly executed. At the Berlin Conference of 1885, his Congo Free State, still flying the banner of international humanitarianism, obtained the approval of the powers. Secondly, Leopold discovered that the fruits of imperialism were not to be harvested merely for the asking. The Congo seemed insatiable in its demands for capital. A lottery, loans, and a thinly disguised hold-up of the Belgian government staved off bankruptcy for a time. And then, with both Leopold and his Free State near the breaking point, salvation arrived in the form of the Congo armada, laden with rubber and ivory to be sold in a rising market.

Behind the Congo fleet lay a record of exploitation without parallel in the annals of modern imperialism. From a government at once irresponsible and profit-hungry little else was to be expected. Yet as rumors began to trickle back to Europe of floggings and maimings—and even mass murders—and when these were corroborated by the White Book of Roger Casement, the voice of protest became irresistible. Leopold temporized and even attempted a counter-offensive. In the end he had to surrender by deeding his colony to the Belgian state, with immense profit to himself.

As a public figure, Leopold was detestable, but there was something of the titan about him. In private life, he was merely contemptible, though not without personal charm. From his childhood he had neither felt nor given affection. Bitterly disappointed at having no heir, he treated both his queen and his daughters with unfeeling brutality. Cynically he paraded a succession of mistresses before his subjects. It was only ironic justice when the old *roué* fell genuinely in love with a shrewish street-walker who nagged him incessantly.

The dramatic possibilities of Leopold's career have lost nothing at the hands of Ludwig Bauer. Recorded in the soberest of language, the story would still be sensational. Herr Bauer has chosen rather to heighten his effects, and his style, though sometimes ponderously Germanic despite the general excellence of the translation, is well suited to his purpose. As a result, he has written a book that makes absorbing reading but one that can hardly be accepted as a definitive life of Leopold. It is perhaps over-academic to notice the fact that no attempt at documentation is made, although much of the material is controversial, and that no list of authorities is included. "Leopold the Unloved," in short, succeeds as popular biography. Beyond that point I should not care to press its claims. The way is still open for a more scholarly approach.

Riches of the North

(*Continued from first page*)

produce. Here are descriptions of the process of paper-making. Here, too, is some account of what lies back of the mills: the timber-cruising, the land-grabbing, the tree-felling, the logging-camps, the railways that thread the forests, an adventurous and ruthless world. We see the north country in detail, shrouded in winter ice and snow, but with troops of men busy reaping its harvest. Nor does Miss Ferber put less of vivid detail into her picture of the home of a Swedish workingman in the north country: its sturdiness, its neatness, its taste wherever it is really Swedish, its lack of taste wherever it is American, its rich, heavy food, the gusty, full-blooded ways of its inmates, their essential discipline and restraint in matters of morals.

All this is good; and excellent also, at least in the first two hundred pages, is the study of Barney Glasgow, the lumber and paper magnate whose family came to the region early enough, as the woman in "The Hoosier Schoolmaster" said, to "git a-plenty while they was a-gittin'," and which believed in taking plenty. An aggressive, two-fisted, hard-headed multi-millionaire, who has a life of hard work behind him, Glasgow is socially as likable as economically he is hard and grasping. He is kind to his men, a good husband to the plain-faced woman he married for her wealth, honest with himself. His economic philosophy is briefly expressed: "Gover'-ment my foot! I'm the gover'ment when it comes to my own business." Glasgow has a magnificent residence, a private car, a hunting-camp in the woods of the peninsula, wealthy friends in Chicago. He knows how to drive his many enterprises fast and far. We follow him with liking even when, past fifty, he falls in love—apparently for the first time—with a dazzling, semi-illiterate beauty who has suddenly sprung up in the home of one of the Scandinavian workmen whom he has always regarded as a crony.

But after that the novel rapidly goes to pieces. It even breaks in two; for Glasgow dies, and his son and the Swedish-American beauty take, in a rather unreal way, the foreground of the picture which he had occupied so vigorously. The tale wanders on and on, in a limp fashion, through London, Paris, and New York, and down to 1929 and after. In the reader's memory there will remain only the well-drawn background of Wisconsin wilderness and industrialism, and the sturdy figure of Barney Glasgow.

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The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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February Blues

Millions upon millions of words were published upon the Hauptmann trial by what that excellent ironist, Mr. Westbrook Pegler, calls our admirably self-restrained newspapers. Millions upon millions superadded to the millions upon millions of newspaper prose which already drench the public mind. Those first brave advocates of a literate world never in their sanguine nineteenth century calculated what literacy would mean for the masses. Much less did they forecast the effect upon the educated minority of these floods let loose of print, print, print.

The vulgarizing of our society has begun, and here is one of its causes. It is impossible to read so much and read well. The sense of style, the desire for exact statement, and all discrimination between coarse and fine, half true and true, are slowly but surely losing ground. Our most timely novels show it, our magazines succeed by it, substituting vigor for nicely articulated thought. We are all guilty, all but mossbacks who refuse to read the literature of the present. A simple test: Can you, do you read poetry? The answer presumably is no, the defense, that modern poetry is not worth reading. A poor defense,—as one moment's consideration of how consistently readers skip poetry if and when quoted in pages of prose, will abundantly prove. Their minds, by voluminous and indiscriminate reading of thin prose, have been conditioned to dilute, undisciplined statement. They will not or cannot rouse themselves to the intellectual labor required by the terser statements of verse. They do not even know whether modern poetry is worth reading. And yet without exception every historian and critic of civilization has testified that as a culture becomes articulate through its language, so language inevitably reaches its height in poetry.

Our society is rapidly vulgarizing, in intellect as well as in behavior. This is not surprising. An era is ending. A revolutionary generation, like all revolutionary generations, is coming up from the uncultivated masses or out of the philistine bourgeoisie. It concerns itself far more with change than with the quality of living—of which the new fiction, the new drama, the new journalism are abundant proof. Given time, the barbarians will pass from strength to quality, and it will be a new quality, not an old refinement. They will make their own manners when they see the need. Super-literary cliques, la-de-da triflers with super-subtleties, patrons of style for style's sake, and prophets of the unintelligible, will not cause this inevitable vulgarization to pause for a split second. They are pathological symptoms of a decline. Only an honest faith in good writing, sound art, fine thinking is useful, and let those who can hold on to that be crowned with laurel, since for many years yet they will get no other reward.

"Everyone knows," writes the author of an article entitled "The Downfall of European Liberalism" in a recent issue of the *London Times Literary Supplement*, "how this is, or is supposed to be, the age of science. Fewer have observed how much, and more profoundly, it is the age of history, deeply historical in its outlook, impregnated with the idea of historical development .... to such an extent that our cast of mind is riddled with skepticism, and in many quarters, notably in contemporary Germany, men seem to have given up the search for truth, defeated by its complexity, disillusioned."

"SHE WANTED A GOOD LOVE STORY WITHOUT ANY SEX."

Letters to the Editor: *Professor Shotwell Defines the International Labor Organization*

The League and Labor

SIR:—The review of "The Origins of the International Labor Organization" in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for February 9 raises a much wider question than the judgment of the reviewer as to the value of this book or the intellectual capacity of those responsible for it. The issue is one of intellectual honesty.

The reviewer shows that he has not read the volumes which he ventures to describe. He states that there are "two hefty tomes on 'The Origins of the International Labor Organization,' of which the first deals with its history and the second with its documentary output." Neither of these statements is true.

The first volume deals with three things: the background of pre-war history, before the International Labor Organization was formed; the negotiations at the Peace Conference and the Washington Conference following it, 1919-20, at which the International Labor Organization was set up; and to this diplomatic history, which does not cover the activities of the International Labor Organization in the intervening years, there is added a section on American labor politics. This section is a short chapter dealing not with the history of the International Labor Organization but with that of the nation which has been outside it. It is true that in the opening paragraphs of my Introduction I made reference to the surprising success of the International Labor Organization in securing "nearly six hundred ratifications of its draft treaties" (the latest returns place it at 632), and at the close of the volume inserted a schedule of this activity. Nevertheless, the history of this legislation is not given, the subjects with which they deal are not described, and the reference to the International Labor Organization's activities in this regard has apparently made so little impression upon the reviewer that he does not refer to the work of the International Labor Organization, but limits his description to that of the International Labor Office. This distinction is of importance, as will appear below. In short, the description of the volume as the history of the International Labor Organization is absolutely false.

The second volume is described as containing "the documentary output" of the International Labor Organization. What it really contains is not the "output" of the International Labor Organization but the documents describing how it came into existence. There are over four hundred pages of documents of war-time and Peace Conference documents, and about a hundred pages of documents describing how the Washington Conference set its machinery at work and dealt with the adhesion of Germany and Austria. These five hundred pages have to do with the formative processes of the origins, and not with the history, of the International Labor Organization. A few documents have been added dealing with labor conditions in the United States and the final adhesion of the American Government to the International Labor Organization—a point not noticed in the review.

Later on the reviewer says: "It is important for future historians to know how the League of Nations tried to 'kid' itself that by establishing a labor bureau it helped to solve the labor problem." This statement displays a degree of ignorance on the part of the writer which is quite beyond belief, or else of wilful misrepresentation. The League of Nations did not establish the International Labor Organization. Indeed, the two volumes are almost entirely devoted to telling how the International Labor Organization came into existence parallel with the League, and even held its first conference before the League had organized itself for action.

The reviewer states, "the reader must be warned that the title is a romantic misnomer," and then proceeds to state that the "self-styled" International Labor Office "should be called the International Bureau of Labor Statistics." There is no reference to the fact that I myself, in the Introduction, wrote as follows: "So far as membership goes the title was a misnomer. What was created was an international economic organization to deal with labor problems." I then went on to describe the work of the International Labor *Organization*. The reviewer describes the work of the International Labor *Office*. The Office is the technical staff of the Organization, and the reviewer is quite right in comparing it to the bureau of labor statistics of a national government, although he is absolutely and wholly wrong in stating that it "has gathered no material which has not been gathered, in each instance, better elsewhere." This statement would be denied by the heads of bureaus of labor statistics of every government in the world. Nowhere has an international bureau received stronger commendation for its scientific work than in the case of the International Labor Office. However, that is somewhat aside from the point, as the volumes do not discuss the competence of the technical staff but deal primarily with negotiations, of which the review says nothing at all.

"Throughout the first volume runs the cry that America must join this research agency." This statement also is absolutely false. There are only two places in the first volume where the present policies of the United States are even touched upon, and that is in the Introduction by myself and in the chapter by Professor Lindsay, describing the trend of American labor legislation. These two references to American policy stand quite apart from the theme consistently followed throughout the five hundred pages of this volume, which is the diplomatic story of the prewar and Peace Conference negotiations that produced Part XIII of the Treaty of Peace.

Mr. Stolberg's misrepresentation of the volumes is strengthened by a denunciation of my own point of view concerning international organization. It would be quite easy for me to show that he has not informed himself concerning what I have written any more than he has concerning the nature of these volumes. I have always claimed, for example, that international organization was dependent upon the political maturity of the states composing it, and the test of political maturity which I have advanced from time to time is the capacity for assuring social justice at home. However, my own philosophy is not the point of debate and I should not have mentioned it were it not for the fact that the animus of the review seems more directed toward myself than toward the volumes, which Mr. Stolberg clearly and obviously did not read.

I have only one general comment to add. It is that intellectual integrity is the first qualification for those who pass judgment upon the works of others.

New York City. JAMES T. SHOTWELL.

From Manley O. Hudson

SIR:—I am astonished to find in *The Saturday Review* Mr. Benjamin Stolberg's account of Professor Shotwell's two volumes on "The Origins of the International Labor Organization." As I have long followed the work of the International Labor Organization, and as I have made a careful study of Mr. Shotwell's volumes, I feel free to say that Mr. Stolberg completely misrepresents the serious work of a great scholar, which at your hands was worthy of more serious treatment. With the aid of competent and informed collaborators, Mr. Shotwell labored on these volumes for years, and this cavalier dismissal of them will not interfere with their enthusiastic reception by every student of the subject.

Most of Mr. Stolberg's review is devoted to the International Labor Office. He seems to be unaware of the difference between the Office and the Organization, and indeed unfamiliar with the work of both. Nor does he seem to know that the United States is now a member of the Organization. With due respect, I would suggest that he read a book on the Organization. He might begin by reading Shotwell's book.

MANLEY O. HUDSON.

Cambridge, Mass.

(Editor's note: Manley O. Hudson is professor of international law at Harvard, and legal adviser to international labor conferences at Genoa and Geneva.)

Soviet Index

SIR:—Being engaged in preparing an index of books, pamphlets, magazine and newspaper articles (published between 1914-1935, in the principal languages of the world) pertaining to various aspects of Russia and the Soviet Union (social, economic, political, etc.), the writer will appreciate co-operation of publishers, individuals, and institutions in providing him with the information which may facilitate his task.

V. N. KOSITSIN.

P. O. Box 485,
Berkeley, Cal.

The Saturday Review recommends

This Group of Current Books:

THE DOCTOR'S SON AND OTHER STORIES. By JOHN O'HARA. *Harcourt, Brace.* A long short story and a number of very short stories.

SHIPS. By HENDRIK VAN LOON. *Simon & Schuster.* The story of ships from 5000 B.C. to the present.

LEOPOLD THE UNLOVED. By LUDWIG BAUER. *Little, Brown.* A biography of the notorious king of Belgium.

This Less Recent Book:

THE MARTIAL SPIRIT. By WALTER MILLIS. *Houghton Mifflin.* A study projected against the background of the Spanish-American War.

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This Is Woollcott . . .

BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

IN the files of a forgotten weekly for American World War veterans which collided with the memorable (or isn't it?) printers' strike of 1919 and vanished as effectively as a fox gone to earth, reposes an illuminating and veracious anecdote. Its hero, so to speak, was an agitated colonel who in the thick of the Argonne fighting found himself in desperate need of getting a message through to the brigade P. C. All his runners were absent on earlier errands or had become casualties in the withering barrage; the Signal Corps wires had been shelled to bits; he was out of pigeons. The narrative continues (I give you *The Home Sector* for October 4, 1919):

> Nobody knows just what would have happened, but someone suggested the wireless. Whereupon the regimental commander sent this message to brigade headquarters by radio:
>
> "Send relief. Am absolutely out of all communication."

The chronicler of this instance of dunderheadedness in high places was Alexander Woollcott, and its recital marks, I believe, his first expressed awareness of the existence of radio.

Woollcott had enlisted in a hospital unit soon after America's entry into the war and arrived in France in the summer of 1917. With the establishment of *The Stars and Stripes* in February, 1918, as the official newspaper of the A. E. F. (which formal affiliation was the only official odor about it) he was transferred to its staff, and with the dawn of America's active participation at the end of May he became, and remained until the Armistice (when he went with the Army of Occupation into Germany), the paper's most persistent correspondent at the front. He was, of course, by the books, as much a soldier as John J. Pershing or Woollcott's own co-ranker, Alvin York; he was never out of uniform, and his chevrons were always in sight. But there were humiliating moments when his belligerent status was rejected. Ours was the most miscellaneous army in Europe; we had no types; we were *sui generis* in the grand manner; we were two million rugged individualists in ill-designed and ill-fitting olive drab. Only a few of us (Pershing most of all) looked like soldiers—we simply had to be accepted as soldiers. And so we were, the whole two million of us except Sergeant Woollcott. During his roving correspondentship he once spent two hours discussing everything but the war with a talk-starved major in a dugout somewhere in the Marne salient. When the sergeant rose to depart the major pumped his hand enthusiastically and said: "Now do come up again soon, won't you? You know it does us fellows good to chat once in a while with someone who isn't in the army!" He dined one evening that summer at a terrasse café on the Butte Montmartre with Elsie Janis and her mother. The recent extension of the draft age-limit from thirty-one to forty-five years was introduced into the conversation, and Mrs. Janis commiseratingly exclaimed: "Oh, Alec, they'll get *you*!"

Beyond peradventure he was in and of the army—he even fell to calling an occasional casual "buddy," much to the subject's bafflement—and out of his militarization came an essential element in his adroitness as a radioconteur. Every periodical aims (not always too deliberately) at an implied intellectual level. That level may be high or it may be low, but inevitably it is horizontal. Yet the line of *The Stars and Stripes* was vertical—it adumbrated the line of the radio audience that was to be. The common denominator of an army and of a radio audience alike is purely physical—good feet; good ears. Any two or two million human beings share some least common multiple of interest; among an army at war that multible progresses geometrically until it all but absorbs the product, which is a compound of bewilderment, homesickness, esprit de corps, suspicion, boredom, a longing for companionship, a yearning for solitude, courage, indignation, pride, loyalty, fear, the fear of showing fear. The radio audience will not assay so readily. It is reasonable to assume that certain of its stratifications prefer silence to Amos 'n' Andy, and that certain others as zealously spurn Colonel Isham's analyses of the letters of James Boswell. Negatively, then, the business is in some degree predictable. Every successful program, moreover, owes much of its reach to negative characteristics. It does not talk up, and still less does it talk down, for no one quicker detects talking down than the man who is being talked down to.

Thus the most significant element in a Woollcott broadcast is that it is not only caviar to the general—it is caviar to the cognoscenti as well. But before all it is caviar to Alexander Woollcott. To him the story is the thing. For first, last, and always Woollcott is a reporter—a reporter who, freed from the thraldom of the city-desk, can choose his own assignments, can write and say what he likes, and who writes and talks only about what is of exciting concern to him. To the telling of the story, written or oral, he imparts all the zest and gusto of one conscious of the ability to transfer to reader or listener his own lively interest in it, and his own interest, once caught, is invariably both lively and elemental. He has said (though never, I believe, publicly) that whatever value he may have been to his paper as a dramatic critic inhered in the fact that he could attend a performance of "East Lynne" and cry as hard as anyone in the house. This capacity is worth marking by those who confuse sophistication with superciliousness, or who regard criticism, whether of plays or books or whatnot, as basically anything beyond the ability to say to one's self: "This is worthy or this is unworthy, this moves me or this fails to move me, and I think I know why."

He has, of course, his stylistic crotchets. His is distinctly a one-man show. He will never be able to take refuge in anonymity (there is no reason why he should want to). Any attempt on his part to hide his light under a bushel must result in early exposure with the blowing up of the bushel. For example, he is perpetually either slave to or master of the adjective; he goes about trailing clouds of them, most of them *mots justes;* they are the matches with which he set Rome afire. One who copyread much of his A. E. F. typescript was wont to remark that in every Woollcott story a regiment of bitter, tortured doughboys crossed a bitter, tortured countryside in pursuit of bitter, tortured Germans. And just as the looting of a daisy-pied meadow leads to breaking and entering in the night time, and beer to gin, he early took to bolstering his adjectives with adverbs. I wish he would rid himself of "faintly," though no more than I wish Mr. Hergesheimer would slough off "'engaging." But this trend to the modifier, whether it be regarded as annoying mannerism or hall-mark of brilliant individuality (and it partakes of both), must be stressed in any consideration of his radio technique, because it is an essential ingredient in the Woollcott formula of intimacy and informality in radio presentation. Every novitiate to the air is cautioned to remember that he is not spellbinding an audience of ten millions, but merely talking to a small family group which, by force of circumstances beyond his comprehension and control, happens to be susceptible of almost infinite reduplication. The essence of broadcasting is informality. It is table talk without the table.

But the table talker (disallowing sporadic instances when he is under the table) is visible as well as audible, and such attention as he wins may owe itself as much to manner as to matter. The higher brackets among radio performers include those who can project a semblance of visuality into the microphone and make it emerge intact. Some of us look forward with misgivings to the televised world that is to be. It will probably be a grave disappointment. It will be identical, perhaps, in its capacity for disillusionment with what radio in 1935 has proved to those who clamped on earphones ten years ago and hoped bravely for the best. Woollcott himself is moderately appalled by the potentialities of this insentient octopus whose tentacles embrace the earth. He appreciates the spuriousness of its universality. He retains, and he will never lose, a capacity for detachment that causes him grave annoyance whenever a publisher emblazons his favorable judgment of a book in capitals that tower above its title. His admiration for the book has not abated, but neither has his competence as a self-critic. And criticism, like all the virtues, begins at home.

To a fraction of humanity which approaches the infinitesimal by comparison with the host who only sit and hear, Woollcott has, to be sure, been visible in the authentic flesh. The extent to which he provided the original for Harold Sigrist in S. N. Behrman's "Brief Moment" is computable only by the most delicate of esthetic micrometers, and the merits of that wise and gentle comedy ought no more to be measured by that approximation than the enchantment of "Trilby" should be gauged by the verisimilitude, or lack of it, of Joe Sibley to Whistler. Behrman had met Woollcott on a few occasions and had encountered the Woollcott legend everywhere, but he had no slightest notion of suggesting that Woollcott take the part, or that Woollcott would accept the suggestion if Behrman had thought of it. The result was, in the script, a blend incapable of accurate labelling which became, in the performance, a still more profound anomaly. Some of the deficiency, if it were a deficiency, can be charged against Alexander Woollcott who, in attempting to impersonate Alexander Woollcott, was assigned a task without parallel in our native dramaturgy. The legend that he is a personification of such behemothian lethargy as Sigrist has long been sedulously cultivated by Woollcott himself. He would like to be regarded as so lazy that even his defense mechanism doesn't work. "Brief Moment" permitted the imposture to come out into the open, and everybody enjoyed it, but nobody enjoyed it more, and nobody was more taken in by it, than Alexander Woollcott.

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT IN "BRIEF MOMENT"

His origins were in no sense metropolitan. This very distillate of urbanity first glimpsed the footlights of the human scene at Phalanx, New Jersey, which hamlet, it is true, is almost within sound of the Knickerbocker equivalent of Bow Bells but which, thanks to the meanderings of the coastline, is even today rather less accessible to the metropolis than Danbury or Rhinebeck. His was a peripatetic rearing—he spent part of his childhood in Kansas City and much of it in Philadelphia, graduating from high school in that city with, of all things, an A.B. It was not enough—he entered Hamilton College, and while he did not, I believe, sing in the chapel choir, he has in recent years made the Hamilton choir deservedly famous by bringing it to New York for an annual concert, and a few months since he introduced it to the air. He has become, indeed, the professional Hamilton alumnus. Certain books in the college library—I do not know how many or what titles—are *ex dono* Alexander Woollcott, '09. Not long ago he bought a copy of Trevelyan's "The American Revolution"—I have this from a bookseller who was willing to violate whatever corresponds to the Hippocratic oath in his profession—and some Hamilton freshman will probably be nose deep in it tonight.

MR. WOOLLCOTT BUYS A BOOK IN MOSCOW

Unlike many of his newspaper contemporaries, Woollcott has not gravitated from city-room to city-room over half the universe. Of dailies, only the *New York Times*, and the *Herald* and the *World* of the pre-amalgamation era, have heard his hurrying footsteps moving nervously and absently toward the wrong door. Harold Sigrist's stride, one concedes, was neither hurried nor nervous, but Woollcott off-stage, and occasionally upstage, is, if hardly a speaking likeness of physical energy, at least something more than a pallid wraith of it. He is no apostle of the strenuous life, if one except croquet—the defense mechanism functions smoothly at this point—but no more is he the immobile Johnsonian bulk of Broadway fable. With every sort of energy beyond the physical he is forever loaded to the Plimsoll mark, and he has a capacity for getting through work that ought to be the envy of the foremost adherents of the pep-punch-personality school.

Everyone who was in the A. E. F. has reflected how much homier and cozier the war would have been if, in the autumn of 1918, a radio set had stood at every American fireside. Admittedly one shudders to contemplate the hurrah-boys note which our more agile commentators of today would have imparted to bulletins hot from the front line or a little ahead of it. To preserve the home folks from such an appalling experience it might have seemed expedient to G-2 to establish a broadcasting station under the jurisdiction of *The Stars and Stripes,* with

> "This is Sergeant Woollcott speaking. I am at a field hospital in the bitter, tortured countryside north of the stricken Marne—a region faintly reminiscent of eastern Connecticut. Beside me is a tattered army cot on which lies a shrapnel-torn marine. One tired, grimy hand hangs limply over the side of the cot, and a shabby white setter bitch is rubbing her cold, damp muzzle against it. She is Verdun Belle . . ."

❧ ❧

John T. Winterich, Editor of the American Legion Monthly, *was a member of the staff of* Stars and Stripes *which among others boasted (for a time) Franklin P. Adams, Woollcott, and Harold Ross, editor of the* New Yorker.

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The Bowling Green

XVIII.

Shrunken Heads

IVALUE our last evening in Lima for its sensation of quiet suspense. Taxicabs were on strike, and we were told that a general walk-out was threatened. Many private cars had ingeniously fixed whisk-brooms in front of the tires to sweep away tacks that had been scattered in the streets. Mounted police were quartered along the southern arcade of Plaza San Martin. A Peruvian friend had promised to go with me to the Herrero Museum, but while we were lunching he received a hurry call to lend a hand with the Spanish version of a speech to be delivered that night by the departing Chinese Minister—who was also sailing next day. As one of the most popular and successful envoys in Lima, His Excellency had had to spend his last fortnight in continuous dining and speechmaking; obviously it was impossible to prepare all these valedictories himself. Did you know, I remarked to my friend, I also once wrote some Translations from the Chinese? True, he said; I have some of them in a book. (He is a man of fantastically wide reading.) I hope your Chinese is better than your Spanish. They are brief apothegms and parables, aren't they? That was their aspiration, I said. Excellent, he continued; the Minister must be running out of material by now; I will see to it that he quotes one of your translations in his speech.—So you may imagine my pleasure to find my sententious and imaginary Old Mandarin quoted, and very apropos, as an ancient Chinese poet, in next morning's report of the Minister's address. In pleasant conversation with the diplomat aboard *Santa Maria* I never quite ventured to confess the innocent hoax. If he ever hears of it, I plead forgiveness; it was the Old Mandarin's only actual intrusion into the high life he speaks of occasionally with such spurious familiarity.

So I spent that afternoon among mummies and pottery, at the Herrero Museum, a long way sundered from municipal disturbance; but I noted that two radical newspaper offices were closed that day by the government; the hotel lounge was unusually deserted at tea-time; and I remember thinking, in my evening walk around the Plaza, that all those loose paving stones would make very damaging missiles.

And so by launch, among pelicans and seals and guano birds, past the Peruvian navy (why should they spend money on new submarines? I'd rather see the same amount to repair the monastery of San Francisco) to our old friend *Santa Maria*. She has been all the way to Valpo and back while we were ashore. She is loading slabs of Cerro de Pasco copper from lighters rearing in the swell. We are to make an additional port, we learn with delight—Huacho, 80 miles or so up the coast, for a cargo of cotton.

But I spare you a recapitulation of the northward run; as delightful in every way as the trip down, in reverse sequence. It was true to type of all happy voyages. There were the two Harvard boys who made us envious of their trip among the Chilean lakes. There was the Frenchman with a giant Schnauzer who spent most of his time sunning on the top deck, and who charmingly said to the children, apropos of the dog, "Call his name if you want him to be good friend and frequent you." It was wondered why the dog was so morbidly hungry, until a stowaway was discovered in a lifeboat adjoining the kennel; he had been eating the dog's meals. Flying three foreign flags—Great Britain, Colombia, and China, for the three envoys on board—*Santa Maria* came gaily along the coast. We were back to sunshine and summer; deck tennis resumed; and Planters' Punches. In the Canal we met the trim U. S. S. *Concord;* I noticed someone toss something overboard from her and thought it hardly good manners in that well-groomed channel. It was a small cardboard ice-cream spoon. At Balboa a New Zealand lady joined us from the handsome Australian liner *Rangatiki*. She was inclined to condescend toward our less glittering routine. It was her first trip to the States; and she asked, in happy seriousness, whether we could go all the way to New York by canal. In Cristobal I saw sadly that the May issue of *Todamérica*—"the magazine for people who think"—was still unbought.

Two scenes especially stand out in mind. One, loading bananas in the dusk at Guayaquil. The mountains are fading blue in the distance; Chimborazo still hidden behind a golden veil; the three nuns in black at their endless orisons on the bench beside the golfing carpet. The bananas show vivid calcium green in the failing light. At each side of *Santa Maria* a floating village has sprung up, big rafts onto which schooners unload the stems; thence up the rattling conveyor. In the bow of one schooner brown men naked to the waist are holding pans of supper while others are still passing branches of bananas for the hold. Under the gunwale of the raft someone has hidden a fallen stem. We have taken on 25,000 stems, and are in a hurry for the turning tide. The big conveyor is swung back aboard the lighter. Everything seems clear. But someone on the tug *Chan Chan* is bereft of his *burro*, which seems to mean what we would call a sawbuck. *Burro, burro!* he calls plaintively. "Go on beat it and never mind your burro," cries some harassed subofficer. The engine-room telegraph clangs, *Chan Chan* drifts away, we are off down river.

STATUE OF BOLIVAR, LIMA
(*The Panel is the Battle of Ayacucho*, 1824)

And the other, the night after leaving Cristobal. The end of August is hurricane season, and everything is well battened down in case. After dinner, a breezy night of full moon, I went up on my favorite silence deck. (Somewhere on the Halifax-to-Hispaniola chart I remember seeing a place marked *Tongue of the Ocean;* perhaps we were near there, for the flow of palaver down below had been enormous.) Aft the movies were squawking, everyone was watching *Shadows of Sing Sing*. But on top of the bridge, by the lighted binnacle (we were steering course 32°) were other and more lovely shadows. White cottony fleeces drifted close above us, obscuring the moon; then, in new brightness, great continents of cloud, fantastically piled and shaped—just such clouds as must have been seen by Shakespeare's sailors in *The Tempest*. Exactly at 1:15 a.m., drawn in hot gold across the milky moonlight, one shooting star.

Through its appointed phases the voyage drew toward port. The usual empty bottle (an Undurraga flask) was put over at 31° 28′ N., 74° 10′ W. As usual, after the masquerade party, someone had to dive in costume into the swimming pool; I wish I had thought to take off my glasses first. You've got no idea how hard it is to find a pair of glasses in the dark in the bottom of a deep tank.

The New Zealand lady had been warned of the magnificent heat she would find in New York. So it was amusing to come up the river in squalls of bitterly cold rain, weather more freakish than anything we had known in Peru. I saw a South American gentleman looking puzzled at the odd names of passing craft. The *American Farmer*, the *Seatrain* (loaded with freight cars), the tug *Dalzell Ace;* similar names in Spanish would puzzle me. He was hopefully clutching a newspaper that had been handed him at Quarantine. A pink paster on it said "WELCOME TO U. S. A. For *All* News of *All* Lands Read NEW YORK AMERICAN." As we huddled into overcoats and hid new Panama hats from the chilly showers, I noticed the printed forecast: "Today, Fair, no change in temperature." The Weather Man's honeymoon was over.

When you get home, the first thing to do is go down to the post office to see what mail has arrived in your absence. There might even have been a check or two. As I made for the familiar lock-box in a Long Island P. O. the young assistant called out, in a voice of urgency, "Don't touch that box!" I paused in surprise, my hand on the combination knobs. "There's a loaded gun in that box," he said.

Surprising greeting to one coming back, as he thought, from wild lands to civilization.

"Not exactly a loaded gun," he then explained, "but I rigged up a blank cartridge and a trigger so it'll go off when anyone opens the box. While you were away someone must have figured out the combination on your box and has been stealing your mail. We got onto it because people found envelopes addressed to you scattered all around the village. It's probably been going on quite a while. I had to yell because I didn't want the thing to go off and scare you to death."

So that may (or may not) account for a good many letters having gone unanswered. Neither the postal inspectors nor the local detectives seemed to worry much about the matter when I mentioned it. I only allude to it here because it relaxes the suspense that has bothered you ever since the beginning of these articles. That was why we didn't get the letter before sailing.

When you come to think of it, how many loaded guns, of all sorts, are pointed at one in the mail.

On the way toward Port Washington, past a favorite avenue of trees, there's a yellowish pile of stone and rubble, rising from a field, that looks not unlike a bit of Inca ruin. Blythe and I pass it on those mornings when I'm allowed to drive her to school, and it always reminds us of Chan Chan, Cajamarquilla, and Pachacamac; it reminds us also how little we know of those great lands we touched at. It's excellent (we agree together) to know even a smattering of other countries so that you can be reminded of them with affection and amusement. And there's another thought too that I have kept to myself. I remember the two gruesome shrunken heads, black downy doll-size faces with lips and eyelids stitched shut, that an archæologist was bringing back from Ecuador. Perhaps the chief value of a trip like this is that it taught some Northamericans also to shrink their heads a little.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Dickens and Respectability

(*Continued from first page*)

yet received from the world. It may be so; I cannot disprove it; but I have my doubts. After the enormous success of "Pickwick" Dickens promptly undertook to write two other novels and made yet other literary contracts—not an unnatural or surprising course of action, one would think, for a self-confident, energetic, intensely vital young man of genius on a swelling tide of popular acclaim. But Mr. Kingsmill says that this complication of enterprises "can only be explained as an unconscious attempt to make up the arrears of attention due to him" through the first twenty-five years of his life. It may be so; but I strongly suspect that such analysis is rubbish. In the prostitute Nancy "Dickens symbolized his sense of guilt." Indeed? "Before he saw America, he thought of it as the Charles Dickens among the nations." When Dickens harps upon the respectability of one of his characters, his "discomfort about his own respectability is obvious." Come, come, Mr. Kingsmill! Was Dickens conscious of a certain discomfort about his own obesity and about a tendency to fall asleep too frequently when he pictured the Fat Boy? Upon Dickens's portrait of Mr. Murdle the comment of this critic is: "Successful and wealthy writers are annoyed by the enormously greater wealth which is the reward of fraudulent finance." It is an annoyance shared by many people who are neither successful nor wealthy nor writers.

Mr. Kingsmill quotes with approval George Meredith's lines:

> And if I drink oblivion for a day,
> So shorten I the stature of my soul,

applying them to Dickens's attempts to escape from reality and forgetting, apparently, that Meredith himself drank large drams of oblivion. And since Meredith is thus brought within our view and since Mr. Kingsmill devotes much of his space to the old unhappy story of Dickens's marriage, it may not be amiss to remark that other novelists besides Dickens have found the marital yoke become burdensome and that some others, Meredith among them, have cast it off more ruthlessly than did Dickens.

For the rest, Mr. Kingsmill's book is very entertaining, both in a way that he did not intend and also because he quotes liberally from his author. By an odd coincidence many of the passages that he selects are chosen also by Monsieur Maurois. To read the French critic's brief book after Mr. Kingsmill's is an interesting experience, so contrasting are the tone and temper of their treatment of the same data. Monsieur Maurois is perhaps less clever than in the long-ago when he wrote "Ariel"; but he has mellowed with the years; and those qualities of head and heart which made him a better interpreter of Byron than of Shelley are just those which stand him in good stead as an interpreter of Dickens. For all his lightness of touch he has a more sympathetic understanding of those men of genius in whom there is a large mixture of the first Adam—"of the earth earthy"—than of those whose raptures are all air and fire. He makes as many damaging admissions as does Mr. Kingsmill; but when the latter critic has done the damage little remains, whereas when Monsieur Maurois has performed the part of the devil's advocate Dickens remains. "The novels prove that he was worthy of being loved." That is the considered judgment of the expert biographer and acute critic who belongs to a nation and a period not usually accused of harboring an overplus of Victorian sentimentality.

Samuel Chew is professor of English literature at Bryn Mawr College.

"Death in particular," writes Dorothy Sayers in "The Third Omnibus of Crime," "seems to provide the minds of the Anglo-Saxon race with a greater fund of innocent amusement than any other single subject, and when it is occasioned or accompanied by Sin in its more repugnant shapes, the fun grows faster and more furious. Let the murder turn out to be no murder, but a mere accident or suicide, and letters pour from indignant readers."

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Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MISS LOVEMAN, c/o *The Saturday Review*. A stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

FOR A SEATTLE CLUB

A. S. H. of Seattle, Wash., *is planning a special program for a university women's book review class to which she belongs, and wishes in this instance instead of following their usual procedure to make the program one to which several members contribute instead of a single one. She wishes therefore suggestions for a topic which can be subdivided among some half-dozen members who will thus conduct a symposium. Since all the members of her organization are amateurs and all are busy they cannot undertake elaborate research.*

IN these days when so many from all over the United States are making the trip to Mexico it seems to me that a program centered about a possible prospective tour to that country might be of general interest. What the intelligent traveller would want as intellectual equipment for such a journey would, I should think, be some outline of the history, ancient and modern, of Mexico, some authoritative and suggestive discussion of its present relations, problems, and policies, description of the land and its people, and something that would convey a little of the romance of its past. Books may come and books may go, but Prescott's THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO still remains the great classic on the early history of Mexico, and though later research has brought to light much which emends and adds to it, it is a work which every visitor to that land should read. It is long, perhaps too long in its entirety for the time at the disposal of A. S. H.'s group, but some member of it ought to read it at least in part. Some one could dip, too, into Bernal Diaz del Castillo's DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST OF MEXICO (London: Routledge), that chronicle of one of Cortez's soldiers to which Prescott went as one of his sources and which Archibald MacLeish in CONQUISTADOR (Houghton Mifflin) follows with great closeness, putting his tale into the mouth of the old adventurer. Mr. MacLeish's poem, which won a Pulitzer Prize, might well have excerpts read aloud by the member to whom it is allotted. It is a stirring narrative which swings along in vigorous fashion and quite apart from its bearing on the Mexican program should furnish excellent reading for the club. With these three works, and if something more specifically from the archæological angle is desired, with H. J. Spinden's ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS OF MEXICO AND AMERICA (American Museum of Natural History) added for good measure, the distant past should be well taken care of, and the reports could then proceed to a study of the evolution of the Mexico of today. There is no better book for this purpose than Ernest H. Gruening's MEXICO AND ITS HERITAGE (Appleton-Century), a study of social conditions, politics, and government, with a survey of church history, and illuminating characterization of Mexican civilization. Mr. Gruening's book, I am told, is regarded in Mexico much as Bryce's AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH is in our country, as a study by a foreigner which is as authoritative as anything in its field. It is dispassionate and analytical, at once critical and understanding, in every way an excellent work. One of A. S. H.'s fellow club members ought without fail to report on it. Another, then, might present a synopsis of Stuart Chase's views as set forth in his MEXICO: A STUDY OF TWO AMERICAS (Macmillan), a roseate portrayal of the Mexican country and its civilization, designed to show the blessedness of a machineless community as over against the defects of a highly industrialized society like that of the United States. One other aspect still remains which should furnish an interesting paper, and that is the Maximilian episode on which two good recent books have appeared—MAXIMILIAN, EMPEROR OF MEXICO (Yale University Press), by J. L. Blasio, and Bertita Harding's PHANTOM CROWN (Bobbs-Merrill). And, lest after the club has had its Mexico day, all the members decide to take their next vacations in that land of beauty, confusion, and interest, some one of the speakers should take occasion to inform them that the best manual for their travels is Terry's GUIDE TO MEXICO (Houghton Mifflin), a revised edition of which is just off the press.

Since there's a possibility that A. S. H.'s club may prefer to conduct a symposium of a different sort I am offering an alternative program centered about the short story. This is one which, of course, offers opportunity for wide reading, but which can be held within bounds by severe selection. I suggest that as background for the study of some of the outstanding short story writers of the day, one of the members report on Henry Seidel Canby's STUDY OF THE SHORT STORY (Holt), which will give them a survey of what had been accomplished up to 1900. Another might spend her time on CREATIVE WRITING: THE STORY FORM (American Book Company), by Mabel Louise Robinson and Helen Hull, an analytical study directed toward the intending writer, and the others could then present papers on a few of the outstanding practitioners of the short story form at various periods of American literary history. Thus one paper would cover Irving, Hawthorne, and Poe, another such writers as Bret Harte, Aldrich, Cable, and Sarah Orne Jewett, a third might include such disparate authors as Jack London, Edith Wharton, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, and H. C. Bunner, and the last could embrace authors of the immediate present like Sherwood Anderson, Struthers Burt, Willa Cather, Edna Ferber, Joseph Hergesheimer, Wilbur Daniel Steele, Ruth Suckow, Dorothy Parker, George Milburn, Ernest Hemingway, and William Saroyan.

ANTIQUE AMERICAN FURNITURE

A. W. D., of Rock Hall, Md., *who says that for some time he has been interested in antique furniture, American periods, from the collector's point of view, has hitherto been depending for information in regard to it on the articles in standard histories of art, and on the Metropolitan Museum of Art handbook on the American wing. He now wants something more definite and comprehensive.*

Charles Over Cornelius, assistant curator of American art in the Metropolitan Museum, one of the authors of the handbook on the American wing mentioned by A. W. D., has published a volume entitled EARLY AMERICAN FURNITURE (Appleton-Century), which covers the ground from the earliest days to the present, is well-written, extremely readable, and lavishly illustrated. There is a comprehensive, but expensive, reference work to be had in Wallace Nutting's FURNITURE TREASURY (Old American Company), which contains descriptions of large numbers of pieces of furniture and utensils, principally of American origin, with accompanying photographs, and, of course, THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF PERIOD FURNITURE (Lippincott), by Harold D. Eberlein and Abbot McClure, is a standard work on the subject. Lurella Van Arsdale Guild's GEOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN ANTIQUES (Doubleday, Doran), takes up the objects it describes by states and devotes the first half of the book to furniture. Finally there is Henry Hammond Taylor's KNOWING, COLLECTING, AND RESTORING EARLY AMERICAN FURNITURE (Lippincott).

ILLUSTRATION BY FREDA BONE, FROM "HIGHLAND NIGHT"

The New Books

Fiction

HIGHLAND NIGHT. By Neil M. Gunn. Harcourt, Brace. 1935. $2.50.

In the early years of the sixteenth century it began to be said in England that the sheep were eating up the men, that where a hundred families had lately tilled the soil, now a single shepherd watched his flocks. Three hundred years later the last stages of the same process were carried out in the highlands of Scotland. To make room for southern sheep and southern shepherds, the dwellers of the glens were driven from the lands of their ancestors to starve on a barren coast or to survive if they could the pest-laden emigrant ships and the perils of the new world.

Mr. Neil Gunn in this novel writes of the "Highland clearances" in which under the pressure of the Napoleonic wars the last step was taken in the application of capitalist technique to British land from the point of view of a Gael and a Scottish patriot. The betrayal of an ancient people by their natural leaders, the destruction of an ancient culture so that the rents of an absentee landlord in London might be trebled, awakens in him an emotion, a bitterness, which the perspective of a century has dulled but little. But if Mr. Gunn tends to idealize the old life of the glens, to exaggerate the ancient wisdom of the common people, and to find an idyllic poetry in what was always a hard, bare existence, anyone who has seen the Glasgow slums and reflected on the gifts of the industrial system to Scotland will be inclined to forgive him.

One could wish indeed that the main theme had been more firmly grasped. It was Mr. Gunn's purpose to show the effects of the clearance on the lives of a single group of villagers, but at times the details of these individual lives obscure the central story. The tragedies of his villagers are a little remote, not always clearly related to the tragedy of the whole people. Or so it seems. Perhaps to some the deliberate cadences of Mr. Gunn's fine prose with their reminiscences of the rich melancholy rhetoric of the ancient highlands may convey a more vivid sense of reality. The fresh and beautifully imagined picture of the daily life of the clansmen is alone enough to repay the reader. But face to face with his main theme, Mr. Gunn seems to have achieved only something in the vein of the "Deserted Village"—a pathetic idyl rather than the high tragedy for which the material cries out. G. M.

THE OLD MAN'S BIRTHDAY. By Richmal Crompton. Little, Brown. 1935. $2.50.

This is a readable and mildly entertaining novel that falls short of being anything more, largely because of the author's insistence upon working out a neat and artificial pattern that is alien to life, and therefore unconvincing. Old Matthew Royston is to celebrate his ninety-fifth birthday, with the numerous members of his family gathered around him. Along with the others he has invited his grandson, Stephen, and Beatrice to his board; and this is scandalous in the eyes of almost all the Roystons, because the domestic happiness of Stephen and Beatrice has been blessed by neither church nor state. But, in satisfaction of a gentle auctorial irony, it is this sinful couple who incarnate true love, and it is Beatrice who resolves the problems perplexing a number of Royston lives, setting wandering feet on the right path, and aiding youth toward the satisfaction of its dreams. Once she has passed by, all is well. Because of her, Helen does not elope with Philip, Enid determines to remain a genuine spinster despite the substantial masculine lure of Max Collin, Pippa is assured of a college education, Richard is provided with a meaning for his hitherto meaningless life, Daphne is encouraged in her sudden adoration of Adam, Adam himself is recommended for a job, and Lilian (indirectly) is moved to battle against the demon jealousy. It is all very neat; too neat for serious consideration. The author dots every i, crosses every t, and conscientiously composes her characters from stock ingredients. Gaston, the valet, at first promises to be an original, but Gaston does not develop. Among other things the reader enjoys a little English-rectory-afternoon-tennis-on-the-lawn. And, yes, there is a curate. B. R. R.

THE IRON MOTHER. By Charles Braibant. Harpers. 1935. $2.50.

The ancient but always vexing problem of what happens to the good qualities of so many excellent French novels when they are translated, is again raised by this English version of M. Braibant's "Le Roi Dort," a book which has enjoyed considerable critical success in France. Let it be said at once that Vyvyan Holland's rendering is always adequate, possessing as it does the two primary requisites of being intelligible throughout, and reasonably faithful to the sense of the original. Yet "The Iron Mother" is somehow quite a different book from "Le Roi Dort,"—as different, in fact, as the two titles themselves.

M. Braibant's novel is his first published work of fiction, but it is in the best sense of the word an amateur's book, and has been prepared for by many years of study and sympathetic observation. It gives a sincere and well drawn picture of the obstinate and hardy folk who lived

(*Continued on page* 509)

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MOSS ROSE *Joseph Shearing* (Smith & Haas: $2)	Lost Lady, holding secret of murder, blackmails killer, falls in love with him, and then . . .	Tale of icy viciousness and ever growing horror told against background of London and Germany of 1860's.	Brilliant
THE CORPSE IN THE GREEN PAJAMAS *R. A. J. Walling* (Morrow: $2.)	Vanishing stiff in verdant night-rail perturbs machicolated family and puts Mr. Tolefree on mettle.	For clever talk, keen conflict of wits, rich background and all round subtlety, this takes a prize.	Grand!
THE POSTAGE STAMP MURDER *Clinton Bestor* (Dial: $2.)	Tahiti is scene of almost endless sequence of murders finally curbed by bearded beachcomber "detective."	They die so thick and fast that plot involving rare stamps loses itself in gore. Plenty of action.	Unbelievable
BIG BUSINESS MURDER *G. D. H. and Margaret Cole* (Crime Club: $2.)	Supt. Henry Wilson, entering on p. 213, solves murder of London financier who would bare huge swindle.	Background of crooked finance is best part of well-knit, ironically amusing, and puzzling yarn.	Good
THE MAN FROM MANHATTAN *Leo Grex* (Crime Club: $2.)	Two guests at questionable British house party are killed; Jerry Downs, ex-Yard, uncovers pretty k. of f.	Mixed identities of leading characters and villainies of lovely ladies set the Jedge's head reeling.	Below par

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HARPER & BROTHERS • NEW YORK

The PHŒNIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

ROUND ABOUT PARNASSUS

BEFORE examining what recent books of verse are upon my desk, I should like to tender the wholehearted concern and sympathy of this department to *Edwin Arlington Robinson,* our greatest living American poet, who is now ill in hospital. I hope his recovery may be speedy. I have a particular admiration for his latest book, "Amaranth," and such reviews as I have seen of it did not seem to me at all to do it justice. People tire so quickly nowadays, apparently, of hearing Aristides called the Just—in other words, when a writer has built up a considerable reputation the time inevitably comes when smaller men wish to tear it down. This is the most general of statements, but I have thought it peculiar that the bright minds on our best journals couldn't seem to perceive the remarkable vigor and originality in "Amaranth." At a time when most poets would be practically through writing, or else repeating themselves, Mr. Robinson accomplished something peculiarly his own yet peculiarly different from much of his work. There had been several of his later books that did not hold or move me as much as the work of his strongest period, but "Amaranth" seems to me an extraordinary poem. In spite of its presentation of the miscast, it is anything but a "tired" poem. It has energy, remarkable imagination, and a subtle humor—deeply ironic though its implications are—that in a man of less achievement would have confounded the critics. As it was it seemed to confound them in a different way. When a man has finally come into his own and received the highest praise, it would appear to be an accepted fact that there is nothing further to say about him. He may continue writing extremely well, but his style is known, all his best qualities have been intensively analyzed, his contribution to literature has become so familiar that the reviewers are inclined to tire of further evidences of it. They are looking around for what is happening in new pastures and they miss what is right under their eyes.

This, at least, is the opinion of one reader of poetry who has been following the current output for some time. "Amaranth" is one of the few volumes I can reread with pleasure and profit. I do not find this study of the miscast in life a pessimistic book, I find it a most wise one. It is the mithridate that inoculates against the poisons of life and should strengthen the spirit. And the creatures of this significant fantasy, even to the pythian cat, Ampersand, are types we can all recognize, drawn with sure skill and yet not at all without sympathy. My admiration is second to no one's for Robinson's great narrative, "Tristram," just as I think that in certain of his shorter poems he created some of the most subtle and beautiful verse of our time; but he has written with wide range, and "Amaranth" is unique in narrative poetry. It is like nothing he has done before. It shows his fullest powers of insight, his ripest intelligence.

One should be grateful to the Overbrook Press for bringing out a new edition of *George Meredith's* famous sonnet sequence, "Modern Love," in a most attractive format and binding, with slipcover. One hundred and fifty copies of this little book were printed last October, with composition by *Margaret Evans* and presswork by *John F. MacNamara.* The address of the Overbrook Press is Riverbank Road, Stamford, Connecticut.

Joseph Auslander has made a distinguished translation from the Norwegian of the poems of *Herman Wildenvey,* the leading poet of Norway today. His first book of lyrics was published in 1907, and at the age of twenty he was praised by *Georg Brandes.* He has won the famous Gyldendal Prize, which corresponds in Scandinavian countries to our Pulitzer Prize. *Knut Hamsun* furnishes an introductory note to this book, highly laudatory, and Mr. Auslander, in a preface, tells us of Wildenvey's life of adventure. His volumes of verse, it seems, number eleven, and he has also written a novel, several collections of short stories, a book of essays, a book of biographical sketches, and done various translations. The present volume is entitled "Owls to Athens" (Dodd, Mead), and this is Mr. Wildenvey's explanation of his title:

By "Owls to Athens," as the old Greeks phrased it,
They meant the adding to what brimmed abundant—
Like gilding the lily or like bread that's wasted
On baker's brats—redundance twice redundant!

To you, America, these songs I bring—
Though all your resonant young forests ring;
Though you, America, my new-found land,
Grasp fistfuls of new beauty with each hand.

Incidentally, Mr. Auslander's lyrical (though prose) descriptions of Norway in his preface are beautiful. It was Wildenvey who introduced him to the country. The translator also speaks eloquently of the difficulties of translation, of how the translator is "continually torn between the scrupulous tyrannies of the text and the nimble latitudes of the spirit." In closing he pays a most graceful tribute to the poet, in laying before him his translation.

The book opens with tributes to Norway and Knut Hamsun. Then come lyrics, two satires, and a long ballad on Mary Magdalene. This poetry is immediately seen to be robust, offhand, even jaunty. Also it is often colloquial with a foreign tang. Sometimes the translator has encountered considerable difficulties with the movement of the rhythm and the falling of the rhyme. Nevertheless, on the whole, Mr. Auslander has managed to convey the fresh, exuberant qualities of the original poetry. The book is different from any you are likely to have seen for some time.

Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

Trade Mark	*Label*	*Contents*	*Flavor*
MODERN LADY *Grace Perkins* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Novel	Success story in which Jane, having won a dominant position among New York's realtors, finds triumph hollow without a man.	Adequate Time-killer
DEVIL KINSMERE *Roger Fairbairn* (Harpers: $2.)	Costume Romance	Scion of good provincial family heads for London, steps smack into intrigue at Charles II's court. Beaucoup action against authentic-seeming backdrop.	Good
SO BRIEF THE YEARS *Natalie Sokoloff* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50.)	Novel	The horrors of Russian post-revolution days as they hit our heroine. Urged by shrewish grandma, she sells herself to Ogpu's head man in return for invalid mama's comfort. Comes the White Prince.	Not So Good
THE GUESTS ARRIVE *Cecil Roberts* (Appleton-Century: $2.50.)	Romance	Inheriting the Venetian island palace of her father, Cleo is forced to open it as a hotel. Proprietor and guests provide the tale.	Entertaining
FORGET IF YOU CAN *John Erskine* (Bobbs, Merrill: $2.50.)	Novel	Using a wealthy attorney, widower, and a svelte mysterious Fifth Avenue modiste, Mr. Erskine demonstrates that a man can't forget his wife's past.	New York

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The New Books

(*Continued from page* 507)

in a small village of Champagne during the last century, with a tart satirical flavor and solid characterizations which add much to its effectiveness. The story itself is not always particularly moving. The drama of a dominant, hard-headed mother and a weaker son, forced by her to lead a double life until the day of his death, is static and not well adapted to such a prolonged narrative form. In addition, the presentation of the whole as a sort of memoir written by an obviously artificial friend of the family, does not tend to enhance the significance of the situation. But the abundance of picturesque detail, the thoroughly convincing nineteenth century atmosphere, and the racy, highly colored language in which M. Braibant reports the doings and sayings of his countryfolk, all combine to make his book a notable one,—in French.

In English, even viewed with charity, it becomes a rather plodding history of a dullish small-town family, perfectly logical but far from overcharged with interest. It is difficult to say just why this curious change has operated, but perhaps it is in part due to the inherent slowness and stiffness of the English language as compared with the flexibility of the original. What is already a little ponderous in French becomes definitely heavy and pedestrian, while the animating vigor of the style, with its use of peasant expressions, as well as the satire inherent in the descriptions of old customs, simply evaporate. There are doubtless other important factors worthy of consideration in this disappointing case of international misunderstanding, but, as in the non-literary realm, in spite of all attempts at conciliation the two parties,—Gallic child and Anglicized stepchild of M. Braibant's pen,—will inevitably remain worlds apart.

T. P., JR.

History

FRENCH REVOLUTIONS. By E. L. Woodward. Oxford University Press. 1934. $3.

"Why," inquires the jacket of this volume, "have Frenchmen changed their form of government at least nine times since 1789? Why have these changes taken a revolutionary form?" These questions, it goes on to say, are discussed in this book. So far that is true. They are discussed, and, within such limits as its compass permits, are, in general, well discussed, or, at least, described. A series of lectures given at Alexandra College, Dublin, they have the form and substance of such utterances. Beginning with an introduction on the general causes of French revolutionary movements, that of 1789 in particular, they include chapters on the Rise and Fall of Revolutionary Dictatorship, on Napoleon I, on Restoration and Counter-Revolution, an account of the reign of Louis Philippe, the Fall of the Second Republic, Napoleon III, and the Commune of 1871. They form, in effect, a brief history of France since 1789, expressed, as it were, in terms of revolutionary movements. They are clearly and entertainingly written; they do not fall into the common errors of the Commune being essentially communist as the Marxians would have had the world believe; nor the illusions cherished as to the national workshops. They are well proportioned, sane, and moderate, as well as informed statements of the case; and, while they discuss, they do not attempt to solve the problem as to why there were so many revolutions—save, as he says, "for the establishment of a politically civilized order"; though he admits in his conclusion that the problem of reconciling it with liberty is still unsolved, that we may still face new and "calamitous changes."

W. C. A.

Latest Books Received

BELLES LETTRES

Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy. M. C. Bradbrook. Cambridge Univ. Pr. Macmillan. $3.50.

BIOGRAPHY

Edward Atkinson. H. F. Williamson. Boston: Old Corner Bookstore.

EDUCATION

Faith and Fear in Child Training. M. W. Eggleston. Round Table Press. $2.

INTERNATIONAL

France's Crisis. P. Einzig. Macmillan.

MISCELLANEOUS

Sailors' Knots. C. L. Day. Dodd. $3.50. *If Lincoln Had Lived.* Univ. of Chicago Pr. $1. *What Shall We Name the Baby?* Ed. W. Ames. Simon. $1.50. *Why We Feel That Way.* A. W. Trettien. Stratford. $3. *Mental Training.* S. N. F. Chant. Macmillan. $2.50. *My Adventure into Spiritualism.* E. L. Howard. Macmillan. $2. *The Costume Book.* Mrs. N. Cookson. McBride. $2.

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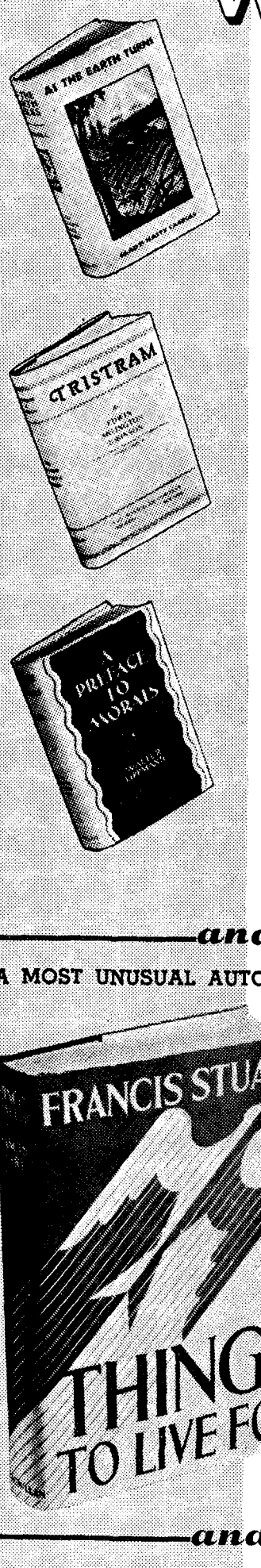

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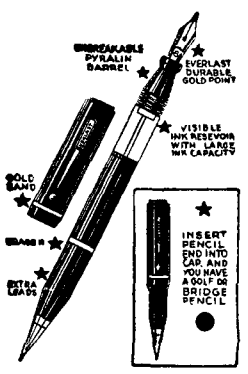
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On Every Tongue

What are little boys made of made of
What are little boys made of
Snips & snails & puppy dogs' tails
And such are little boys made of.

THE authorship of these excessively discriminatory lines has always been matter for conjecture, with few authorities entered as conjecturers. We may be sure, however, that they are at least ninety-two years old, for Robert Southey died in 1843, and a draft of the verses in his hand which survives was probably written about 1820. Did Southey compose them, or did he merely like them and copy them? No man can say. But Southey indubitably wrote the story of the bears and the porridge and all that, which is even more famous than the little-boy analysis. The manuscript of the verses as Southey transcribed or composed them will be open to inspection from February 24th to March 23rd at an exhibition of the First Appearance in Print of Some Four Hundred Quotations in the Olin Memorial Library at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.

The Southey exhibit, it may be argued, is not in print, at least not in the Wesleyan exhibition, but the answer is a ringing what-of-it? The description of the manuscript is most emphatically in print in a 262-page catalogue of the exhibition which is available (but will not be for long) in an edition of six hundred copies purchasable through the university at two dollars a copy—a ridiculously underprivileged figure. There is no name on the title page, and the preface is signed C.A.W., and Carroll A. Wilson will be bitterly resentful of this emblazonment of his name as compiler of the catalogue and as general factotum of the exhibition. But the catalogue is an amazingly fine job—it is more than a catalogue, it is humanized bibliography—and the exhibition which it mirrors must, under such supervision, be comparably fine. There is time to be in at the birth. At the official opening of the exhibition on Sunday evening A. Edward Newton will be master of ceremonies, so it will be off to a rousing start.

Mr. Wilson's preface to the catalogue is an admirable exegesis of the quotability of the familiar quotation. That familiarity is due, in his estimation, to "two marked characteristics—a simple idea, and an accurate rhythmic beat." This truth explains the ubiquitousness in the display of Longfellow and Tennyson and the absence of Swinburne, Matthew Arnold, Lanier, and Mrs. Browning, who "charm the cultured soul in the warmth of the study, but do not spring from the red brick schoolhouse to remain fixed forever in the recesses of the brain." Most of the four-hundred, therefore, are poetical quotations, but there is a spattering of most familiar prose. The prose quotation itself is of peculiar interest owing to the transmutations to which it is susceptible. Its very lack of an "accurate rhythmic beat" makes it liable to repeated alteration. Everybody knows, for instance, that a student on one end of a log and Mark Hopkins on the other were held (by James A. Garfield) to constitute a university, but the underlying idea has suffered extraordinary metamorphoses, which the reader of the book will see for himself.

Poetical quotations themselves are subject to popular editing, and often the amended version gains such accuracy that the original becomes definitely supplanted. We all say "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war," and the reader is urged to consider before continuing what the original version may have been. Everybody knows, of course, or will in three seconds (unless he has paused to consult Stevenson), that it is from Nathaniel Lee's "The Rival Queens, or the Death of Alexander the Great," (London, 1677). But Lee wrote: "When Greeks joyn'd Greeks, then was the tug of war." Why, by the way, should this particular fragment have survived so hardily? Why should ten thousand others?

The Wesleyan exhibition is full of folk comparable to Nathaniel Lee. It is long since this department has conducted a contest; let one here be initiated that will celebrate a group of anonymous immortals. Each of the following books is on view at Wesleyan; each enshrines a quotation as familiar as "Greeks-joyn'd-Greeks." What is the quotation? The answers will be given anon:

1. William Wycherley: "Love in a Wood, or, St. James's Park. A Comedy." London, 1672.
2. William Congreve: "The Mourning Bride. A Tragedy." London, 1697.
3. George Berkeley: "A Miscellany, containing several Tracts on Various Subjects." London, 1752.
4. Thomas Morton: "Speed the Plough: A Comedy." London. 1800.
5. Henry Lee: "A Funeral Oration, on the Death of General Washington." Philadelphia, 1800.
6. Thomas Haynes Bayly: "Songs and Ballads, Grave and Gay." Philadelphia, 1844.
7. James Thomas Fields: "Poems." Boston, 1849.
8. Charles Kingsley: "Andromeda and Other Poems." London, 1858.
9. Josiah Gilbert Holland: "The Marble Prophecy, and other Poems." New York, 1872.
10. Arthur O'Shaughnessy: "Music and Moonlight—Poems and Songs." London, 1874.
11. William Haynes Lytle: "Poems." Cincinnati, 1894.
12. Robert Loveman: "The Gates of Silence with Interludes of Song." New York, 1903.

Trade Winds

by P. E. G. QUERCUS

☞Pondering old Q. is sometimes disturbed by typographic attempts to be tony and newfalutin. Take Herbert Read's brilliant essay on *Art and Industry* (Harcourt; a grand book) which is a genuinely profound study of the creative and decorative instincts. But the famous old Cambridge University Press has made it harder to read, not easier, by modernistic style in printing. ☞When, oh when, will printers learn that letterpress exists only for legibility? ☞That fine booklet about Grant Wood that the much admired Lakeside Press (Chicago) got out: the illustrations are superb but the textual introduction, well written, is almost unreadable: measure too wide, and no indented paragraphs.

☞A young man who recently went to work in a Lexington Avenue bookshop tells us the first 5 books he was asked for. They were: *The Elegant Woman* (transl. by Laver), *The Philosophy of Life* (Baten), *Main Street* (Lewis), *Fifth Avenue Bus* (Morley), *The Saint in New York* (Charteris). ☞A subtle forward-looking tip to the Genuine Few: keep an eye open for Enid Bagnold's *National Velvet*. ☞Q. is hoping that at this year's quinquennial election Henry Thoreau will, at last, get into the Hall of Fame.

☞When Thornton Wilder named his novel after the familiar doggerel about "Heaven's my destination," did he remember that James Joyce introduces the Irish version of the same rhyme into the early pages of *Portrait of the Artist*? ☞Philip Duschnes, the rare and first-edition bookseller, has been second-high in so many auction-room tourneys that he meditates an autobiography to be called *Underbidder*. ☞Lippincott's will find a good customer in Charles Lauriat of Boston when they publish that lively volume of sea stories, *Spin a Yarn, Sailor*, by "Sinbad." Lauriat's have been plugging "Sinbad" for a long time. ☞James B. Pond's sprightly magazine *Program*, an organ of the public lecture profession, tells a good anecdote of our old friend Louis Untermeyer. Taken to lunch just before lecturing in Detroit, Louis was offered coffee. "No," he said, "I don't like to be kept awake during my lectures."

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ANONYMOUS WRITER. What have I accomplished vainly attempting to belittle America's greatest and most beloved scholars in Elizabethan literature? Just this, dear heart. PLENTY. Leslie Hotson, the boy-wonder 'Sherlock Holmes,' evades explaining why he said that "Shake-speare" signed certain legal papers, when those papers were not signed "Shake-speare." That's something. Tucker Brooke of Yale, the University with the Posy, "Lux et Veritas," declines to prove his tripe in "Yale Shakespeare." That's something. Maister Doctor Rosenbach, Doctor of *Lettres,* Pennsylvania; and Doctor of Gold *Lettres,* Columbia, refuses to discuss the TRUTH about his UNIQUE "Faerie Queene." If I am the sap you intimate, why do not these MAGNIFICOES squelch me? I bear no malice. To me, a prof. of Eng. lit. is no more than a puff of smoke. I AM FIGHTING FOR THE TRUTH ABOUT "WILLIAM SHAKE-SPEARE." George Frisbee.

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IF A WOMAN is neither brilliant nor charming, but sincere and amiable; if she has a thirst for good literature, but is not an intellectual, would choose Wagner but can tolerate jazz; if she prefers nature to bridge, originality to "correctness," and friendships to social alignments; if she is 35 and "undesigning," are there any men interested in corresponding with her? Box 258-A.

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Double-Crostics: Number 48

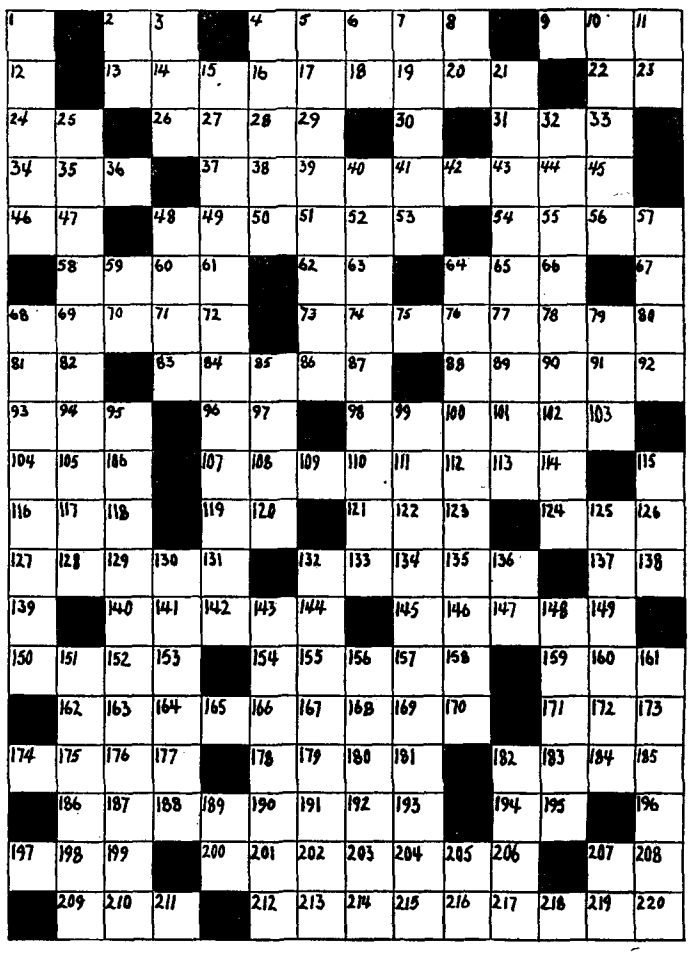
By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-nine words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered (these numbers appear at the beginning of each definition) and you are thereby able to tell how many letters are in the required word. When you have guessed a word each letter is to be written in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

Either before (preferably) or after placing the letters in their squares you should write the words you have guessed on the blank lines which appear to the right in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter. The initial letters of this list of words spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
I. 72-36-141-55-131-9-219-160-21-66-130. Divide into partisan political districts.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
II. 74-157-3-42-67-187. Home town of Mark Twain's wife.	_ _ _ _ _ _
III. 46-162-123-29-143-147-53-137-60-33. Password of Ali Baba.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
IV. 128-90-1-214. To stir up sediment.	_ _ _ _
V. 13-102-5-37-112-132-92-176-210. The zero meridian.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
VI. 61-156-200-172-77. Dwelling place of Saul's witch.	_ _ _ _ _
VII. 83-188-124-158. Crafty, ingenious.	_ _ _ _
VIII. 108-82-216-70-170-87-152-207-58-144. Christian antagonist.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
IX. 69-201-180-199-167-40-76-145-34-94-139. Outlined, adumbrated.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
X. 35-211-106-64-27-159. Poem by Swinburne.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XI. 148-107-95-99-208-31-179-164-194-183-49. Without feeling.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XII. 50-12-196-154-24-173. Famous Tractarian of Oxford Movement.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XIII. 73-117-2-134-181. A knot in wood.	_ _ _ _ _
XIV. 209-113-71-120-23-155-52-45-7-149. A Wagnerian opera.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XV. 133-178-220-125-93-84. Like a wise old bird.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XVI. 44-20-26-100-56-91-184-98. A novel by Thackeray.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XVII. 177-119-150-39-169-203. Luncheon in India.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XVIII. 10-142-168-14-51-202-146-121. Straightforward.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XIX. 198-30-205-15-4-80-171. Giant-like.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XX. 122-81-138-111-11-129-8-166-105-186. Payment or reward.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXI. 43-153-17-96. To neglect, leave out.	_ _ _ _
XXII. 57-163-195-126-28-89-62-18-38-116-218-109. Ordinary (comp.)	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXIII. 191-25-48-135-104-212-65-197-114-182. Admirer of England.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXIV. 41-86-101-165-115-204-127-161. Hastened briskly.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXV. 88-185-59-118-97-47-192-32-54-63. Russian composer (1891-).	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXVI. 78-6-215-136-110-16-206. Extreme eagerness.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXVII. 151-75-22-175-85-190-68-213-193. Direct knowledge.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXVIII. 189-217-79. Egg of a parasitic insect.	_ _ _
XXIX. 103-174-19-140. To prepare for publication.	_ _ _ _



SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (NUMBER 47)

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE—"CHRISTABEL"

The night is chill, the forest bare;
. . . . . .
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

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CULTURED young man, nineteen, references, go anywhere, do anything obtain college education. Box 264-A.

SWEET, unsophisticated, would correspond with interesting, intelligent young man. Joan.

DOES New York City contain a Christian gentleman, 30-35, with a fondness for books and a sense of humor, who is sufficiently alone to be interested in meeting someone who prefers books to bridge, has a good disposition and a dimple? Cynthia.

ARE THERE people in Tucson, Arizona, who would share expense of buying new books such as Musa Dagh, Salzburg Tales, Saroyan? Write P. O. Box 2552, Tucson.

INTERESTED in making $20-$100 weekly spare time? Stamp brings details. Box 623.

WANT to correspond with lady, owning or interested in purchasing a yacht, with competent man handling all details. Captain.

WOULD retired clergyman, doctor, or other middle-aged gentleman of travel care for pen-friendship of middle-aged Englishwoman somewhat alone? "Britania."

PHILADELPHIA MAN. Waited Bellevue. Call Dewey 7787 mornings.

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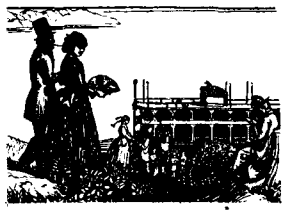

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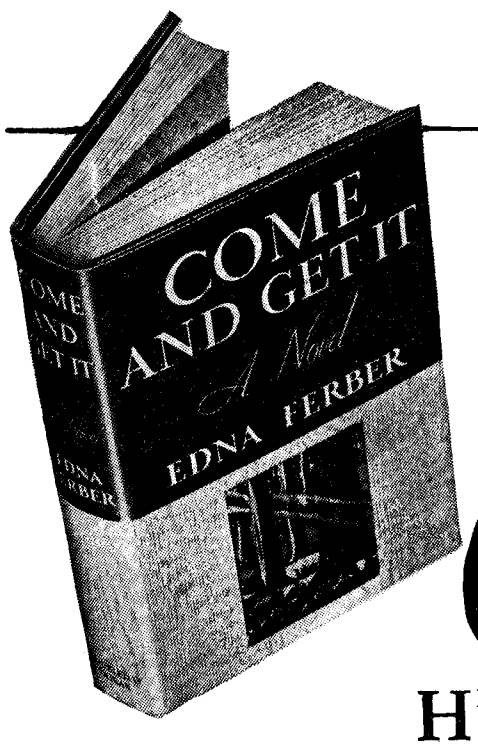

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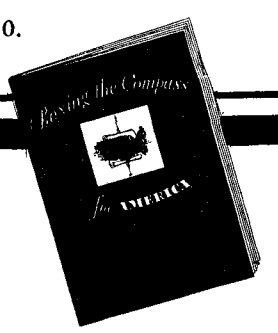

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